



**FYN Garden Q & A Series**

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**FYN Topic: Low Privacy Pool Cage Border**

**Question:** What flowering shrub makes a nice border for a pool cage? We are seasonal resident living in a large, Fort Myers, master-planned community restricting our choices to only an ‘approved’ list. However, we have had to replace the pool border twice with plumbago and four years later using ixora. Despite fertilizing and using an in-ground sprinkler timer set for twice weekly watering, both failed to thrive. We like the privacy of a low border plant and like to see it trimmed to four feet. Our community has a hired landscape contractor who maintains the lawn and keeps our shrubs trimmed. Our neighbor’s hibiscus hedge looks good but the flowers are always getting cut off. What better plant choices do we have? Candy W. Fort Myers

**Answer:** Your search for the right plant for a low privacy border requires knowing your community’s ‘Approved Landscape Plant List.’ Depending on the age of your community, the list could be short. For example, one nearby community allows just 15 different shrubs. Plumbago, ixora and hibiscus didn’t thrive so it’s important to rule out other unsuitable plants such as croton ‘Mammy’, dwarf bougainvillea, foxtails, dwarf allamanda and xanadu. Two others possibilities include variegated arboricola and Ilex “Schellings,” but they don’t offer the strong flowering habit you want. Your location and soil conditions dictate picking from a list of just three suitable plants: Lantana depressa, Indian hawthorne and Thryallis ‘Rain-of-Gold’. With only three right choices, decide how short the border needs to stay. All three require little maintenance pruning, fertilizer, extra water and are used in Florida-Friendly Landscaping™. Of the three, ‘gold-mound’ or yellow Pineland Lantana produces the shortest (2-3 ft) plants but it needs to be replanted every 3-5 years. Indian Hawthorn is woody, evergreen, and fast-growing . It thrives in poor soil and stays dense and dark green in sun or shade. It tops out at 4 ft and the mostly white blooms appear in early spring. Thyrallis grows slightly taller (4-5 ft), has cascading, golden-yellow blooms year-round. Of the three, Thyrallis needs regular weekly irrigation during the dry season.



**Thryallis shrub**



**Thryallis blooms**

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